Conversion of LoC into a soft border

405. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pak-President during his recent visit proposed converting the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir into a soft border without committing to accept it as a long term, permanent border solution to the Kashmir problem; and

(b) if so, the offer made and its implications towards a solution of the Kashmir issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

Indo-US Relations

406. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during his recent visit to the US, President George Bush had made a strong personal commitment to build on US-India relations and to take them to a much higher level, over the next four years of his term;

(b) if so, the precise offer made and its implications; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken in the light thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) External Affairs Minister visited Washington DC at the invitation of US Secretary of State from 12-14 April, 2005 and met President Bush on April 14 in the Oval Office of the US President. President Bush said that he was going to use the next four years of his second term to further strengthen US-India relations to take them to a much higher level. He spoke about India as a global power with whom US wanted to work very closely for global peace. He also said that India and the US needed to work together in the area of energy. President Bush conveyed that he was very much looking